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[Melgarsh Village]

us spectators (Munbokwutn, the youngest father, was also there), started crying. He insisted that he be given some water to drink, which was done, although not strictly in accordance with custom. Sodam was also given a little, as she too started to cry when she saw her little brother getting what he wanted. But Sodup did not stop crying. He now complained that they were taking his mother away, and that he would be left without her. Sodam added her wails to his, and finally Erzigwuf took them both along with her into the *puzharsh*, which was quite unorthodox. So there did appear, all the same, to be a certain amount of jealousy in the hearts of the two elder twins.

In the middle of the ceremony, Kuddhue turned up. He was, at the time, functioning as the *wursol* of the Karsh *mad*, and should strictly have remained on the job. He had even come to Melgarsh by the quickest way, i.e. along the main road, which made him unclean and unable to resume his work as a priest without the complicated ritual of purification. But he preferred to be *perol* ("ordinary man", that is, unclean), he said, than to miss the new-born twins, whom he had not yet seen. He brought some sweets for Sodup and Sodam, but the latter were already in the *puzharsh* and could therefore not be given them.

In order to obtain information concerning initial maternal care of children and the early development and education of the latter, I was obliged to question Erzigwuf and not rely only on my observations (which I would have preferred) as the time at my disposal did not allow for the longer method.

Thus, in answer to my questions, she told me that she had breast-fed her children for the following lengths of time: Pershrörsh, one year and a half; Narjilkh, three years; Pengelam, two years; Sodup and Sodam, two and a half years. She had, she assured me, fed them this way even after she was pregnant, the last set of twins until the seventh month. The fact that the babes had teethed when they were seven months old had not kept her from continuing breast feeding; they had certainly bitten her, but that was not much worse, she said, then their pulling and scratching her breasts with their hands. Sodup had been especially bad in this respect, tugging at her hair too, throwing stones and household articles at her and, after he was a year old and could walk, saying aggressive and sadistic things to her, such as his desire to disembowel her. They behaved thus when she did not suckle them quickly enough but also, she added, when suckling it seemed to add to their enjoyment. The usual way to wean Toda children is to smear the nipples with the plant called *poli*, but it had not been necessary to do this with the twins